

Memo from

To: Hon. John L McLellan

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

U S Senate

JAN 28 1971

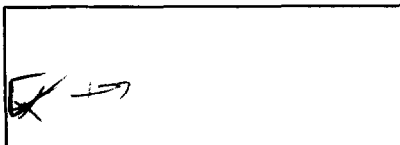
JOINT COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Dear Senator McLellan--

I wonder whether you can retain much hope or interest in this question; I was fascinated by the long and worthy struggle you kept up during the last decade. There is a brief allusion to it in the attached article, which deals with the very closely connected subject of "TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENT". The remarks most immediately pertinent to a unified budget were unfortunately deleted (editorially); so I also enclose the original typescript.

Are any copies still available of the hearings and reports of your subcommittee? I have in mind, especially, Sen Doc 11 (87Cong-1) "Financial Management in the Federal Govt." Any other related materials would also be most welcome.

Yours cordially,



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of commitment to solve our urban logical policies in directions that are

The zero-net-value argument ignores the obvious investment in education which the community expects to recoup as a tax on the citizens product during his earning years. If we follow this line of argument, the person's 'social value' is that part of the 'added value of his productive efforts' that goes to the community, less the corresponding value of what he receives, adjusted to present values.

This hardnosed approach has been resisted because it would obviously make the (gainfully employed) rich far more valuable than the poor; i.e., it ignores the intangible, non-economic values of even unproductive humanity.

As I barely touch on in the last paragraph of the Post piece, and pick up again in the BAS article, the question is a red herring: the protection of life, regardless of economic productivity, is part of the social contract. The person's perception of his rights and expectations of social support of his life and health binds him to the society -- if you like is the price of the bribe to keep him socialized, and allow the community to pursue its other aims in a tranquil social order.

Mishan has, I think, pursued a similar argument in his recent paper.

Geo Risk

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